

SPARE THE ROD

For millenia societies have used the rod, or equivalent, to achieve appropriate punishment of those who broke the social covenant. If the punishment doesn't work the logical answer was/is increase the punishment again and again until inevitable reality hits:

The Prison Policy Initiative of Northampton Mass. an esteemed NGO that studies prison systems worldwide has released its 2024 up-date on Global Incarceration. The winner once again is the United States with the highest imprisonment rate in any independant democracy on earth.

After years of penological failure, a bloated prison budget of \$14 billion dollars per year (1) (3) and a revolving door of prisoners the California Legislature introduced AB 1104, Bonta, in January 2024. This Bill places "punishment" where it belongs citing: "The deprivation of liberty satisfies the punishment purpose in sentencing." Then AB 1104 cites a bold 21st century penological mission: "The purpose of incarceration is rehabilitation and successful community reintergration ..."

With AB 1104 introduced in January 2024 by September 2024 there is little progress, as the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) finds itself diametrically opposed from the top to the lowest levels:

The old guard wants to maintain the old school of obscurantism and punishment with the mind-set "spare the rod and spoil the criminal" ADVOCATING more punishment to solve the problem. The Fox assures "All chickens are dangerous."

VERSUS

A progressive faction of CDCR realizes punishment only makes bad men worse and good men bad. Rather than punishment this faction wants to teach. Piercing the dominating dark veil of ignorance with the illumination of knowledge, logic, critical thinking, decorum and social responsibilities. Spare the rod and teach logical choices.

Until these factions can find unanimity nothing is going to change except wasting more tax dollars.

In the calculus to achieve "Rehabilitation" Mental Health is a major element that can not be marginalized. Criminality and poor mental health go hand-in-hand down the road to ruin. Yet, it is common for prison psychologists to be assigned case-loads of 600+ prisoner/patients (5). It doesn't take a degree in psychology to know the value of this is little more than rhetorical. Spare the rod and get real with mental health.

Politicians are masters at rhetoric. California's Governor Gavin Newsom expounds in news interviews "I am against mass incarceration." Yet, looking behind the curtains Newsom's distain of mass incarceration proves non sequitor, since 20% of prisoners in CDCR are harmless elderly stockpiled by parole denials of 82% (2) (3) (4).

Academics, mental health experts, courts and legislators, agree it is a humanitarian and budetary waste not to parole these non-risk old men costing taxpayers \$2 billion dollars a year (1) (3) (4). It appears the dog of reason's tail is wagged by bias. Spare the rod and stop the senicide.

(1) Legislative Analyst's Office

(2) CDCR Offender Data Points webpage

(3) Calif State Dept. of Finance

(4) Calif Parole Board reports

(5) SATF M/H cccms

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<http://betweenthebars.org/blogs/895/>